

UNCLASSIFIED

2/3/79

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ACTION SY-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3371

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason

~~SECRET~~ BUENOS AIRES 9865

E.O. 12065: XDS-4 12/3/99 (CASTRO; RAUL) OR-M
TAGS: SHUM AR ASEC
SUBJECT: ~~SECRET~~ BUENOS AIRES HERALD EDITOR THREATENED

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. BUENOS AIRES HERALD EDITOR ROBERT COX HAS RECEIVED A LETTER SENT TO HIS SON "WARNING" THAT HE AND HIS FAMILY MIGHT BE KILLED BY GOVERNMENT FORCES UNLESS THEY ABANDON ARGENTINA. THE LETTER PURPORTS TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY THE MONTONEROS. IT SAYS THAT THE COX FAMILY CAN ABANDON ARGENTINA AND LIVE ABROAD "FOR EXAMPLE, IN PARIS WITH FRIEND ROSENBLUM" (THIS IS A REFERENCE TO MORT ROSENBLUM, FORMER AP REPRESENTATIVE IN ARGENTINA WHO IS NOW THE EDITOR OF THE PARIS INTERNATIONAL HEARALD TRIBUNE). OR, ALTERNATIVELY, THEY CAN "ALL STAY AND DIE FIGHTING FOR LIBERTY", A VICTIM OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT. THE LETTER SAYS "WE PREFER THE FIRST OPTION AND WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THAT" OTHERS INCLUDING "THE LITTLE FRIENDS OF YOUR FATHER (FREEMAN, FRIEDMAN, ETC.)... PREFER THE SAME." (FREEMAN AND FRIEDMAN ARE RESPECTIVELY THE EMBASSY'S POLITICAL/LABOR OFFICER ANTHONY G. FREEMAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER, TOWNSEND B. FRIEDMAN).

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3. THE LETTER IS FILLED WITH DETAILS ABOUT THE COX FAMILY THAT COULD NOT BE ACQUIRED CASUALLY. IN A GESTURE

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OF PARTICULAR CRUELTY THE LETTER ADDRESSES COX'S 9 YEAR OLD SON, WHO IS THE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY MOST CONCERNED ABOUT HIS FATHER'S SAFETY, AND IT SPEAKS TO HIM IN A MOCK AVUNCULAR TONE.

4. COX HAS TAKEN THE LETTER TO MINISTER OF INTERIOR HARGUINDEGUY. NEITHER HARGUINDEGUY NOR COX BELIEVE THAT THE MONTONEROS AUTHORED IT. HARGUINDEGUY, SUGGESTING THAT SUCH LETTERS ARE THE PRICE OF PUBLIC LIFE IN ARGENTINA, DID NOT THINK IT TERRIBLY IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE IN HIS VIEW REAL TERRORISTS ACT RATHER THAN WRITE THREATS. HE DID PROMISE TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER, HOWEVER,

5. COX BELIEVES THAT THE LETTER WAS PROBABLY WRITTEN BY THE SAME PEOPLE WHO, ANGERED AT TIMERMAN'S RELEASE, THREATENED HIM AFTER JACOBO TIMERMAN'S DEPARTURE IN SEPTEMBER. HE SUSPECTS THAT THEY MAY BE CONNECTED WITH NAVY SECURITY FORCES. HE DOES NOT HOWEVER BELIEVE THAT THIS THREAT IS PART OF A GOA CAMPAIGN TO INTIMIDATE TIMERMAN INTO SILENCE BY THREATENING TIMERMAN'S FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS IN ARGENTINA. IN FACT, COX HAS TOLD US ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT IN HIS OPINION ALLEGATIONS OF SUCH THREATS OF REPRISALS ARE WITHOUT FOUNDATION. MOREOVER, HE NOTED THAT WHEN HE BRIEFLY CONSIDERED LEAVING ARGENTINA IN SEPTEMBER IN THE FACE OF THREATS, PRESIDENT VIDELA SENT HIM A PERSONAL MESSAGE EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT HE WOULD REMAIN IN THE COUNTRY. COX AND HIS FAMILY HAVE LONG BEEN PLANNING TO SPEND THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS WITH HIS RELATIVES IN ENGLAND. WHILE
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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CONCERN ABOUT THIS LATEST THREAT HAS CAUSED HIM TO MOVE UP THOSE PLANS A BIT, HE HAS OF YET MADE NO DECISION ON WHETHER HE WILL PERMANENTLY LEAVE ARGENTINA.

6. WE TOO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MONTONEROS WERE THE AUTHORS OF THE LETTER. IT IS POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF THE SECURITY FORCES OPERATING WITHOUT GOA APPROVAL OR KNOWLEDGE MAY WELL HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE. THE MENTION OF TWO OFFICERS OF THE EMBASSY WAS GRATUITIOUS AND INSIDIOUS BUT WE DO NOT FEEL THAT THEY ARE UNDER ANY IMMEDIATE THREAT. WE ARE LOOKING INTO THE MATTER WITH THE GOA.
CASTRO

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